

Simmons touts funds for reading programs

By Nicole Souza
Mystic River Press

GROTON – As a part of President George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind Act, Congressman Rob Simmons (R-2) announced that Connecticut would receive more than \$42 million in federal funds.

During the next six years, the funds are expected to target improvements in student's reading skills through the Reading First Program.

At the Groton Public Library, Tuesday, Simmons introduced



Simmons

See Read, page 8A

MYSTIC RIVER PRESS

Thursday, July 10, 2003

Read

Continued from page 1A

Chris Doherty, of the U.S. Department of Education and Director of the Reading First Program, a board funded by the federal money.

Under the Reading First Program, the Connecticut State Department of Education would offer sub-grants of about \$300,000 to 17 Connecticut school districts. These grants would allow the dis-

tricts to offer teacher training, a literacy team in each school, independent literacy practice and other services with the goal of teaching all children to read well by the end of grade three.

"Academic success is one of the keys to success in life," Simmons said of the program.

About 150 school districts in Connecticut would be eligible to apply for these sub-grants, according to Frances Rabinowicz of the State Bureau of Curriculum, and

Instruction Chief and writer of Connecticut's grant.

The grant was applied for largely on a need basis, reflected by CMT scores.

Of the \$7.4 million to be awarded in the first year of the program, districts would compete for a portion of the \$5.9 million available as sub-grants specifically to the school districts.

"Certain schools are targeted, but all teachers in all the schools are eligible for funding," Simmons

said, referring to the remaining portion of the funds to be set aside for professional development.

State Senator Cathy Cook (R-18) was also on hand Tuesday to welcome the funding.

"This check could not have come at a better time," Cook said. "I'm not negotiating the budget in Hartford today because I would rather be here collecting a check."

Nicole Souza can be contacted
at nsouza_nrp@comcast.net